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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 25, 2021, at 12 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, MAY 24, 2021

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You place melodies in our hearts. Thank You for the music of Your mercies, for the harmonies of Your sacred words, and for the symphonies of Your unfailing love. May Your songs that surround us in the spacious skies and rolling hills inspire our lawmakers with reverence and faith.

Give our Senators such awe for Your goodness that they will strive to obey You. Provide them also with a faith that stands firm and embraces Your plan.

Lord, save us all by Your power and liberate us with Your might.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

NATIONAL GUARD

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, this week, the National Guard is departing what has been a months-long presence here at the Capitol. Aspects of the Guards' presence here were not fleshed out as clearly or coherently as either Congress or the servicemembers deserved, and Members of Congress will continue to discuss and debate whether it is appropriate for uniformed military personnel to play an ongoing role in policing the U.S. Capitol going forward.

But where Senators are absolutely, 100 percent united is in our great admiration and appreciation of the individual men and women who volunteered to serve in the National Guard, who have put on the uniform, and whose orders brought them here to the Capitol Complex.

It was my particular honor to get to meet and talk with several groups of the remarkable men and women of the Kentucky National Guard during this period.

Thank you, all, from all 50 States, for your patriotism and for your service.

NOMINATION OF KRISTEN M. CLARKE

Mr. MCCONNELL. On a completely different matter, when President Biden's nominees have been qualified and mainstream, they received bipartisan cooperation. But the President's choice to head a key Division at the Department of Justice as an Assistant Attorney General failed to even advance out of the committee.

The Democratic leader had to reach into the Judiciary Committee and rescue the nomination of Kristen Clarke. Our colleagues on the committee did not give her a favorable recommendation. That is because of a long history of statements that placed the nominee on, frankly, the far-left fringe of the political spectrum.

If our Democratic colleagues have their way, a couple of days from now, the American people will have an Assistant Attorney General who argued publicly just last year that "we must invest less in police." She used that exact phrase three times in one essay.

Violent crimes shot up dramatically in 2020. One survey of 30-plus major American cities found that the murder rate jumped 30 percent last year alone. Other estimates have found even larger increases. Experts say 2020 saw the largest 1-year rise in homicides that America has ever seen as far back as we have recorded these kinds of statistics.

Early data from this year suggests that 2021 may even be worse, but, apparently, the President's response to this violent crimewave is to have a proponent of defunding the police help run the Department of Justice.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Adequate policing is not an enemy of civil rights. Among other things, a recent study by multiple university professors confirmed that more cops lead to fewer murders:

Larger police forces save lives, and the lives saved are disproportionately Black lives.

Police funding isn't the only important issue where the nominee's judgment has missed the mark.

Three years ago, when the then-Attorney General was standing up a task force on religious liberty, Ms. Clarke said this was designed "to make it easier for people to use religion to mask their discriminatory goals"—an incredibly out-of-touch, far-left statement.

Finally, we are currently watching an alarming spike in anti-Semitic attacks and violence across our country. I introduced new legislation on Friday, with Senator COTTON, to confront anti-Semitism head-on, but as a Harvard undergraduate, Ms. Clarke invited, welcomed, introduced, and then defended a famously anti-Semitic guest speaker who had authored a book literally entitled—now listen to this—"The Jewish Onslaught."

The nominee has stated recently that she regrets that decision. Goodness, I would certainly hope so.

Yet she also claims that her op-ed from just last year, which asserted three times—three times—that we must invest less in police, was not actually suggesting that we invest less in police.

This is not the right nominee for a crucial post at a crucial time so I would urge colleagues to vote no this week.

CHINA

Mr. McCONNELL. Now, Madam President, on another matter, last week, a bipartisan majority of Senators voted to proceed to floor debate about our Nation's long-term competition with China.

There is no disagreement that the People's Republic's strategic capabilities and its growing influence beyond the Indo-Pacific pose a singular challenge to American strength and security. There is robust debate about the right ways to address this challenge.

The legislation before us arrived on the floor incomplete, and it spans a number of huge issues that occupy multiple committees' jurisdictions. It is a prime example of a bill that needs a thorough, bipartisan amendment process here in the Senate. So far, we have had a few votes on important amendments. There are a lot more that need consideration, and we should not close debate on this bill until those amendments are addressed.

Unfortunately, during one important vote last week, our Democratic colleagues sent a telling signal. They voted down Ranking Member INHOFE and Vice Chairman SHELBY's amendment to make sure that the real back-

bone of our competition with China—the resources we allocate to our Armed Forces and national defense—was not neglected.

Make no mistake, supply chains, espionage, intellectual property—those are all important topics, but all the policy tweaks in the world would not amount to much help if we lose our military edge with respect to China. Soft power isn't much good without the hard power to back it up.

The Chinese Communist Party appears to understand this quite clearly. According to one watchdog, it has increased military investment by 76 percent over the last decade. China has increased its military spending by 76 percent over the last decade. The same data show that our own U.S. defense spending fell 10 percent over that period, thanks to the approach of the last Democratic administration, and now President Biden has signaled that he wants to cut defense spending after inflation—exactly the wrong approach.

No serious strategy for our competition with massive foreign powers could leave the U.S. Armed Forces, their tools, and their resources out of the conversation in a meaningful way. I hope and expect we will have a number of further votes on important amendments before there would be any attempt to shut off debate on this wide-ranging measure.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

ENDLESS FRONTIER ACT—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1260, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1260) to establish a new Directorate for Technology and Innovation in the National Science Foundation, to establish a regional technology hub program, to require a strategy and report on economic security, science, research, innovation, manufacturing, and job creation, to establish a critical supply chain resiliency program, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Schumer amendment No. 1502, in the nature of a substitute.

Cantwell amendment No. 1527 (to amendment No. 1502), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

TRIBUTE TO BILL HOULIHAN

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, if you have been involved in Illinois poli-

tics and government in the last 40 years or if you have called my office in Springfield anytime in the last 24 years, there is a good chance you know the fellow I am about to speak about this afternoon. For those who haven't been lucky enough to meet him yet, let me tell you about my friend, one of the best people I have ever known. His name is Bill Houlihan.

Bill came to work on my first Senate campaign in 1996, and when we won, I asked him to be my staff director for downstate Illinois—all 96 counties. He has been with me ever since, and now he is State director of the entire State. Whenever I can't attend an event in Illinois, Bill is the person I turn to. I don't have to write any speech for him, and I don't have to check on what he said. People know Bill speaks for me, and I have complete confidence in his judgment and integrity.

Everybody seems to know him. Just try going to a grocery store with Bill Houlihan in Springfield, IL. Be prepared for delays as everyone needs to talk to him or to thank him for something that he might have done: Thanks for helping my mom get her Social Security. Thanks for helping my dad with the Veterans Health Administration. Thanks for helping to get that passport so my daughter could go away to school. Thanks for helping the local union get the project that creates the jobs here in our community.

Over the years, Bill has helped thousands of people find jobs and provide for their families. He knows about the dignity of work. He does whatever he can to help whomever he can, having no expectation of any recognition.

Bill started his professional life in 1981, fresh out of Eastern Illinois University. He was the class president. His first job was with the Illinois Education Association. They sent him into a David-and-Goliath battle scene in Peoria, IL, where they were trying to convince the local teachers to sign up with the IEA. They hired Bill 6 weeks before the crucial election and sent him into Peoria—his first campaign for a union. You see, Bill had worked on political campaigns for his dad, and I will talk about those in a minute.

When he got down to Peoria—a place where he had never lived—everybody knew him, and whenever he went up and introduced himself as Bill Houlihan, they would say: Well, are you the son of Bill Houlihan?

He would say: No, I am the son of John Houlihan.

Bill didn't understand for a while why he kept getting that question. It turns out that he had exactly the same name as Peoria's longtime and venerable TV weathercaster Bill Houlihan.

When, as a young union organizer, Bill showed up, puzzled teachers always said: Are you sure you are not related to Bill Houlihan?

Our Bill Houlihan was no TV personality, but Peoria teachers quickly learned that he cared about them and